



"Remembrances of Things Past"



President William McKinley, having been re-elected for a second term, visited Santa Barbara in 1901 and was paraded up State Street in a floral carriage (see NOTICIAS, Winter, 1968, pp. 13-15) shortly before his untimely assassination in Buffalo, N.Y. Here is the President bidding good bye to his Santa Barbara hosts.

“REMEMBRANCES OF THINGS PAST”*

This issue of NOTICIAS has grown out of a long period of meditation. It was prompted partly by the title of Marcel Proust's famous novel,* partly by the editor's scrap book entitled *Yesterday*, and finally by a particular number of NEWSWEEK in 1970 called “Nostalgia, the Vogue for the Old.”

Nursing nostalgia has always been one of man's favorite pastimes, but lately, to quote one commentator's account of the phenomenon, it has “swept America like a Kansas cyclone.”

This is doubtless due to a number of factors beginning with Norman Cousins' mind-shaking article in *Saturday Review* following the dropping of the atomic bomb over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and continuing with the Korean and Indo-China wars, the tremendous increase in the indiscriminate use of drugs, the phenomenon of protest and confrontation, and the ever-increasing incidence of crime throughout America — all these have turned man's thoughts back to a simpler, slower-paced, quieter and less complicated period of our lives.

“The repetition of an experience,” says Proust, “as in the drinking of a cup of tea, may bring a flood of memories long dormant.”

While this issue of NOTICIAS has been designed in the hope that it will offer our readers a ready-made “memory stimulator,” and thus, pleasure, we are constrained to offer at least one tried and proven method of recalling the past that has the unqualified endorsement of authorities ranging from *The Episcopal Book of Common Prayer* to the memoirs of Dwight D. Eisenhower. It has been recommended by writers and philosophers from Marcus Aurelius in the second century to Leonardo da Vinci in the fifteenth, and from Montaigne in the sixteenth to Thomas Edison in the twentieth. Its praises have been sung by such diverse personalities as Addison and Goethe, Thoreau and Somerset Maugham, and John Cowper Powys. The method is Notemaking. Notes in the margin or on scraps of paper; at all odds, notes! These can be substituted for or added to by pictures or memorabilia: anything that will bring back a time or place or experience.

This writer has consistently made notes and collected memorabilia for more than half a century. He believes he is traveling in good company when he reviews the “authorities” mentioned above.

And so, we claim that in these critical times there is good reason for a revival of the cult of Nostalgia and the methods of recalling another time, if only for the therapeutic value such an activity offers.

This issue of NOTICIAS has been made possible through the enthusiastic cooperation and assistance of Robert Gates, librarian of the Historical Society. We are also greatly indebted to Mr. Isaac Bonilla for the use of his pictures of the burning of the old Potter Hotel, selected from his collection of rare historical photos.



Plaza del Mar on a Sunday in 1898. Note Burton's Mound (upper left) later the site of the Potter Hotel (1901).



From 1902 until 1921 Plaza del Mar, where the Municipal Plunge is located today, was the most popular spot in town both for visitors and for residents. On Sundays people took the street car to "The End of the Line" at Castillo Street where there were benches for many hundreds of people. The famed Potter Hotel, then in its heyday, is shown in the background.



Two great tourist hotels were in their golden days during the 'teen years, the new Arlington on upper State Street, and the Potter (later the Ambassador) on Burton Mound facing West Beach. This photo of the Potter was made about 1915, looking north from Cabrillo Boulevard.

The fame of these two popular hostelries carried the name of Santa Barbara around the world. The Potter was destroyed by a fire in 1921; the Arlington was destroyed by the earthquake of 1925.



The lobby of the Potter Hotel was high ceilinged and spacious. It was furnished, as were most resort hotels in those days, with what was called Mission furniture — solidly built arm chairs of fumed oak with leather or cane seats. The hotel, built in 1901 by Milo Potter, was reminiscent of the Raymond and the Huntington in Pasadena. It was designed by John Austin of that city who was one of the architects of the Los Angeles City Hall and scores of other prominent buildings in Southern California.



Piazza of The Potter Hotel on a Sunday morning.

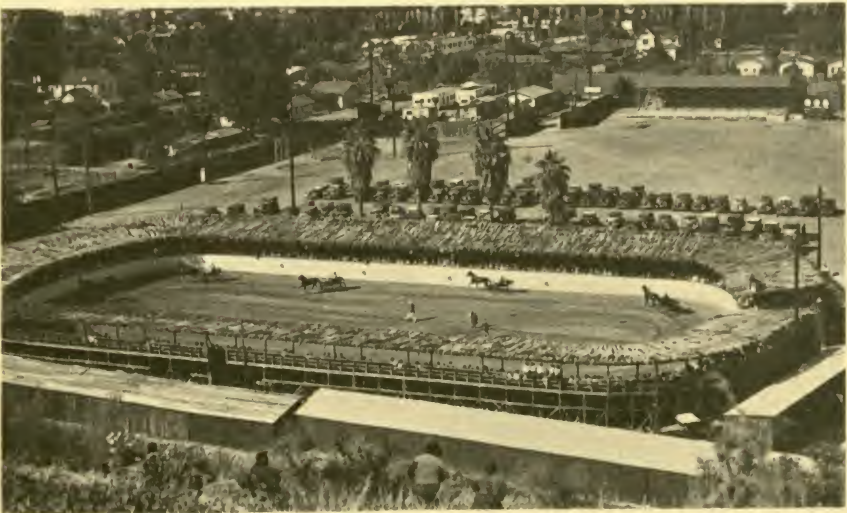


At 3:30 p.m. on April 13, 1921, smoke was seen issuing from under the caves of the Potter Hotel.



Almost before anyone knew what was happening the upper floors of the hotel were a mass of flames. A strong off-shore gale was blowing and embers and sparks were falling on yachts in the harbor and on Stearns Wharf.

By late afternoon, there was little left of the magnificent Potter Hotel. See NOTICIAS (Spring, 1969, p. 12) for Isaac Bonilla's description of the burning of the Potter Hotel.



For many years from 1919 on, the Santa Barbara National Horse Show was held annually in Pershing Park on Castillo Street near West Beach. In this picture we join some young people who enjoy watching the equestrian events without having to pay an admission fee. The horse show moved to Earl Warren Showgrounds when it was completed in 1958.



Few pictures of the past reveal so nostalgically the peace and repose so typical of the era before the Turn of the Century as this view of the veranda of the San Marcos Hotel at State and Anapamu Streets. The veranda was added to the defunct Santa Barbara College (1873) by its principal owner, Col. W. W. Hollister who called it the Ellwood Hotel. After the death of Hollister in 1886 the hotel was renamed the San Marcos.



This was the main highway between Santa Barbara and San Francisco in 1916. Near Gaviota Pass the Editor and his brother stopped beside a wayside spring to fill their canteen and refresh themselves and cool down the new Dodge. The editor is the figure in the white shirt, just 55 years ago!



In the 1890's and up through the first two decades of the present century, Summerland looked like this. To those of us who remember this scene there is only one thing missing — the heavy odor of petroleum which permeated the sea air as we drove along the shore.



Stearns Wharf was built just 99 years ago, in 1872, by lumberman John P. Stearns. This picture was made sometime in the 1880's and shows three schooners unloading lumber from the Northwest for Santa Barbara's big building boom.



Our picture archives turned up two pictures of a burro cart with children; one taken in 1885, the other in the 1890's. Careful inspection would indicate that cart and burro are the same in both pictures. The one with the little girl giving the baby burro "tender loving care" was obviously made beside the veranda of the old Arlington Hotel.





This was the principal vehicle for the transportation of passengers and freight in California until the coming of the Americans. No license plates were required on these ox-drawn caretas, nor were horns necessary, for the wooden wheels on wooden axles announced the approach of the vehicles many minutes before their arrival. Until well into the 1900's there were many of these caretas still to be seen in Santa Barbara even though they were now used mainly for decoration rather than for transportation.



Before the development of paved roads and streets, the watering wagon was an absolute necessity in California in the summertime to lay the dust. At many places along the North-South highway, the roads were watered down at least once a day.

“DOWN BY THE DEPOT”

The arrival of the first train linking Santa Barbara with Los Angeles via Saugus and the Santa Clara Valley on August 17, 1887 was commemorated with a pageant at the Southern Pacific depot just forty-two years later, on August 16, 1929, as the principal feature of the Old Spanish Days Fiesta of that year.

Engine #38, shown in this picture, though not the actual engine to haul the first train into Santa Barbara, was an exact duplicate of the original. Having been built in 1886, it pulled its first train into Santa Barbara following the opening ceremonies. For many years thereafter, it was a familiar sight almost every day until its final retirement from service in 1911.



Ten of the sixteen battleships of the “Great White Fleet” at anchor before Santa Barbara on April 25, 1908. All warships at that time were painted white with buff superstructures. On that day Santa Barbara put on another of its famous floral parades. Thousands of white-clad sailors marched in the parade and attended elaborate ceremonies at Plaza del Mar. There are still many Santa Barbarans living who remember this gala event in our history.





No album of pictures designed to stir up nostalgia would be complete without at least one to remind us of the tense moments at the depot in 1917 when the boys were entraining for World War I. Here Santa Barbara turns out en mass to say "Good Bye" to the recruits on their way to camp.



Since the day the first train arrived from Los Angeles in 1887, there has always been a fascination about train watching to old and young, as long as steam was used to propel locomotives, "Down by the Depot" had a ring of romance. Although we have printed many pictures of engines, we are including this one because we think it one of the best shots of an old timer we have seen. This was one of several sections of the first train to arrive in Santa Barbara.



One of the fine yachts which once called Santa Barbara "home port" was the HAIDA of Major Max C. Fleischmann, one of Santa Barbara's most generous benefactors. It was he who made possible the building of the Breakwater in 1929, giving the city for the first time a still anchorage for small boats.



Karl Obert's beautiful photo taken soon after the completion of the break-water (1929) before the build-up of the sandbar. The three masted schooner yacht at anchor was considered the largest of its kind, privately owned, on the seas. It was later owned by King Carol of Rumania, and still later, on a cruise on the Adriatic, it carried the sometime King of England and a lady who later became the Duchess of Windsor and a dozen of some of the most famous names in the world for company. Note the luxurious bed of freesias on the bluff which was onetime the site of the famous Dibblee mansion and today is the campus of Santa Barbara City College.



Until the end of the Twenties, one of the most familiar sights along the waterfront was the daily discharging of lumber from the Pacific Northwest by coastwise ships at Stearns Wharf. This photo by Karl Obert, one of Santa Barbara's most distinguished photographers for the past half century, shows two of the last lumber ships which later had to give way to the railroad. This picture was made shortly after the completion of the breakwater in 1929.



From her earliest history Santa Barbara loved a parade. Here are veterans of the Civil War in the 1880's, their ranks already beginning to thin out, marching down State Street past the Clock Building at Carrillo. The spire of the Presbyterian church and the dome of the San Marcos Hotel can be seen at the far right of the picture. A horse car is following the band.



The Santa Rosa, largest of the Pacific Coast Steamship Company's fleet, plied between San Francisco and San Diego, making stops at San Pedro, Santa Barbara, and Port Harford, (landing for San Luis Obispo). The 400 mile voyage from San Pedro to the Golden Gate took two nights and one and a half days and cost, including the train trip of 22 miles from Los Angeles to San Pedro, plus all meals aboard ship, \$15.00. The ship, long a favorite with Californians, was 354 feet long and built of iron. It was called "The Floating Palace". "At any moment during the night time," wrote one enthusiastic passenger in 1886, "the occupant of a stateroom, by merely touching a spring, can cause the room to be instantly illuminated. By the same kind of process, the light can be easily shut off."

The Santa Rosa went aground at Honda, near Point Arguello in a blinding fog, on July 7, 1911.



FESTIVALS & PARADES

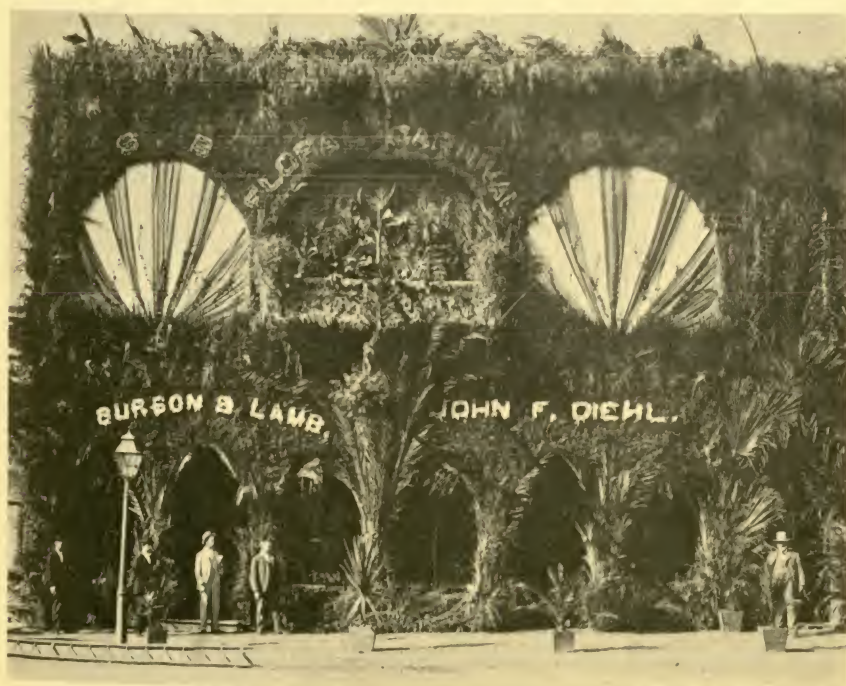


Following the spectacular and beautiful Battle of Flowers, the parade staged in Santa Barbara for the visit of President Benjamin Harrison in 1891, the city outdid itself in putting on the Floral Festival in 1893 with more than one hundred units in the line of march, half of them private vehicles completely covered with roses and other blossoms. The handsome barouche in the picture is said to have displayed more than 15,000 La Marque roses.





Perhaps the most beautiful floral parade in Santa Barbara's history was that of the Floral Festival in 1893. The town went all out to make it a memorable occasion. Even stores, as seen in this picture, were tastefully decorated with pampas grass plumes, pepper boughs and cut flowers. Eight floral arches spanning the 80-foot-wide State Street at one block intervals were part of the over all city's decorations.





One of the notable floral parades of Santa Barbara's history was that staged for this visit of the Atlantic Fleet in 1908. Here is one of the rose-decked floats making the turn at Plaza del Mar where the official reviewing stand was erected.

In the 1930's Santa Barbara entered floats in the Pasadena Tournament of Roses, started in 1889, and in 1937 this city won the Sweepstakes Prize for its exquisite Peacock float, winning over nearly sixty other competitors from all over California and the West. The following year Pasadena complemented Santa Barbara by sending its 100-piece Tournament of Roses Band and a delegation of more than 500 citizens and officials to Old Spanish Days Fiesta.

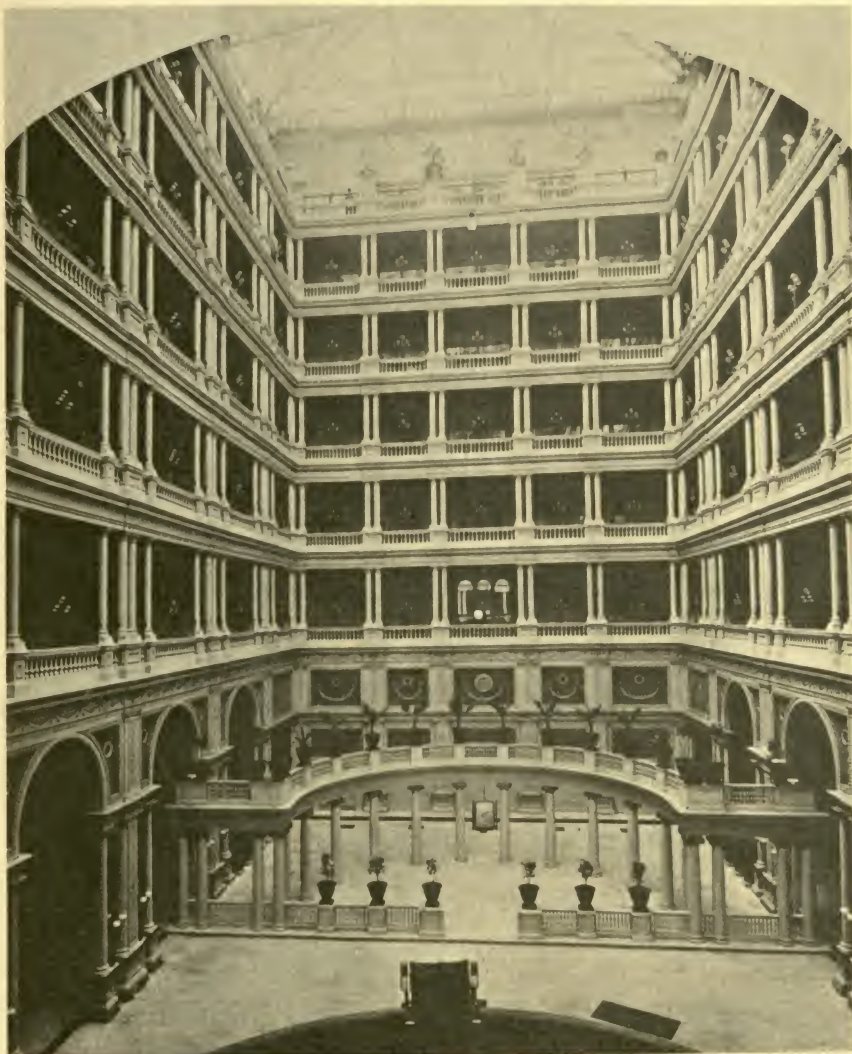


As this issue of Noticias is being prepared, the Mission Inn in Riverside, one of California's most unique hotels, built in 1903 by Frank Miller as a successor to the original Glenwood and designed by Arthur Benton and Myron Hunt, was being threatened with extinction as its present owner sought to sell it. The memory of the Inn and its "Master" is precious to thousands of its patrons and friends for the peace and joy created by Frank Miller whose dream hotel was a temporary home to so many. No wonder that Carrie Jacobs wrote "The End of a Perfect Day" while a guest of Frank Miller. The editor spent his 13th birthday there and returned annually for two weeks with his family for thirty-four years, hence his nostalgia! This picture was made in 1906.



Speaking of nostalgia — perhaps some of our readers, like your editor, remember with quickened emotions the nighttime scene on the shores of the Golden Gate when The Tower of Jewels and all of the beautiful Venetian buildings of the Panama Pacific International Exposition were illuminated in 1915, just 56 years ago in what many authorities consider was the most beautiful world's fair in history.





At the turn of the century when this picture was taken, the Palace Hotel in San Francisco, contemporary with the original Arlington Hotel in Santa Barbara, was in its glory, but it had but six years to live, for on April 18, 1906 it was gutted by fire following the earthquake although it was virtually undamaged by the tremor.

It was in this rotunda that your editor, as a choirboy of the Canon Kipp Memorial Mission Chapel, on Christmas eve 1904 sang carols while Madame Louisa Tetrassini, the opera star, blended her voice with the choir from an upper balcony as the boys, in cassock and surplice, stood in a circle around a Christmas tree standing in the immediate foreground. Thus, he was able to say with nostalgic pride: "I sang with Tetrassini!"



Not too long ago one of the most beautiful yachts in Santa Barbara harbor was the "Samarang" owned by the late Rudy Caspers, popular member of the local Yacht Club. This picture by Karl Obert, was given to the editor by Caspers, an old-time friend from Pasadena, his "home town", following a memorable cruise across the Channel sometime in the 1950's. It has been included to give a thrill to every marine buff, and because it is a beautiful picture.



A rare photograph of the piazza of the De la Guerra Mansion taken about 1874. At the far end are Dona Josefa, widow of Don Pablo de la Guerra and her children, Carlos, Delfina and Herminia. The shorter of the two ladies standing at the left, is her other daughter Francisca, wife of Thomas B. Dibblee. The taller lady is the daughter of Don Francisco de la Guerra, brother of Don Pablo. Don Francisco is standing opposite his daughter and the man sitting is Captain Antonio de la Guerra.



Family group taken at De la Guerra home in early 1920's. Left to right: Mrs. Underhill Dibblee (Carmen), Mrs. M. Dibblee Poett (Mercedes), Wilson Dibblee, Ynez Dibblee, Albert Dibblee Poett. Seated on bench: Herminia de la Guerra Lee, Francisca de la Guerra Dibblee, Delphina de la Guerra Dibblee (Mrs. Thomas B.), Harold Poett (child, far right).

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Contributions to the Society are tax exempt.

COVER PICTURE

"The Surrey with the Fringe on Top", before the Model T, was the most popular and useful of all the horse-drawn conveyances. Here, obviously posed for the picture, is such a rig with a finely groomed horse, and a boy, rumor has it was a Dibblee.